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Mumbai Food and Beverage Hospitality Snapshot

Report Categories:

Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional

Market Development Reports

Market Promotion/Competition

Beverages

Fresh Deciduous Fruit

Tree Nuts

Wine

Snack Foods

Promotion Opportunities

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Report Highlights:

Mumbai hotels and their food and beverage (F&B) teams have a familiarity of working with diplomatic missions for presenting and increasing the popularity of imported food and beverage products and cultures. Awareness of consistently available imported American products appears a constraint and some trade/hotel servicing and education could be necessary even though some F&B members possess broad and deep knowledge of U.S. cuisine.

General Information:

FAS Mumbai interviewed some of the food and beverage teams for leading hotels in the Mumbai area in November 2014. Hotels want to increase their profitability as well as the “experience” for their hotel guests and food or beverage customers. As such, most hold food promotions and organize theme-based events on their own and/or with local diplomatic missions or other interested parties (e.g., tourism promotion offices, private companies, media, etc.). Generally, hotels want to collaborate with FAS India and the USDA Cooperators or State and Regional Trade Groups (SRTGs).

Food and beverage teams generally reported difficulties securing imported food and beverage products. Many teams were generally unaware what American food and beverage products were in the market in consistent volumes and at price points that met their target menus. All hotel chains have discretion as to what products are featured and placed on menus (i.e., not all buying is mandated by corporate headquarters) and many food and beverage teams are receptive to hearing more about the available products that could be considered for incorporation into their restaurants, retail shops, catering teams, bars/clubs, and, room minibars.

These prominent hotels are very conscious of providing a positive experience for their customers as well as the brand or image of the hotel. Educational and training opportunities for their staff are also a valuable programming activity. All hotel food and beverage groups advised that events require significant planning and close collaboration to ensure that activities are successful for all involved parties. Often, events need a pull factor and should also be something that guests can identify with as part of a culture or concept to feel a degree of authenticity.

Nearly all hotels have an element or several that distinguishes them from their competition. In some instances, it may be ease of access to the airport, the central business district, a convention center, or a cross-roads location that provides a middle ground for the southern and northern expanses of Mumbai. Hotel chains all seem to be expanding throughout India as they bring increasingly more locations to market (for more information review the FAS India authored HRI reports).

As both Indian and international business and recreational travel expands, hotel rates are running at high-occupancy. Too, with the glamour of Mumbai night-life and need for weekend-escapes, many hotel restaurants and bars are a luxurious albeit affordable escape. Too, during weekdays, the restaurants are a convenient and quiet meeting place to discuss upcoming ventures in a vibrant and growing economy that has an increasing connection to global trends. Additionally, many hotels remain busy hosting corporate receptions, functions, and are a destination of choice for wedding banquets and catered parties.

Hotel events are publicized through direct emails and e-flyers are sent to many of the guests that they have in their databases as well as to new media. Some hire outside sources to help market and promote events. Many hotels also use print, electronic, and other media to spread the word about their events. Many times, it seems that publicity for an event may start between 2 weeks to 1 month before an event and continue through the event duration. Often, events will last for 1 to 2 weeks and seldom continue longer so as to prevent a single-event fatigue. Many successful events are conducted or even contracted on a repeating basis (e.g., quarterly or annually) as customers respond well to certain themes or certain

trainings need to be repeated on account of staff rotations or turnover.

For More Information:

U.S. food, beverage, and agricultural product exporters, Indian buyers/importers and distributors of U.S. foods and beverages, USDA Cooperators, and SRTGs should contact AgMumbai@fas.usda.gov